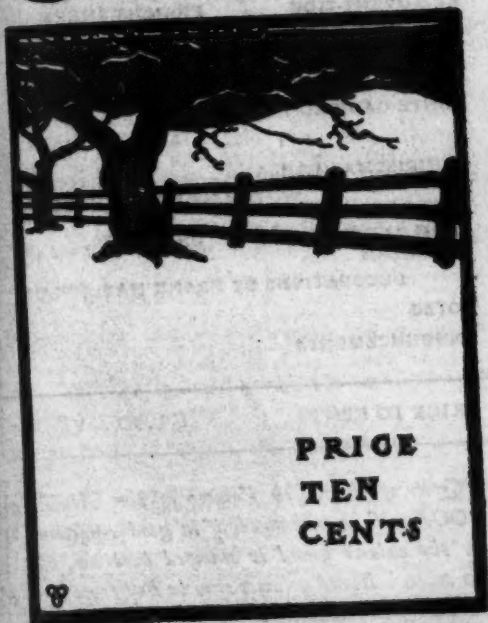


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VOL. VI.

No. 3

THE CHAP



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BOOK

THE CHAP-BOOK

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AT ADVENT-TIDE

THE carved stalls; the altar's drapery;
The stained glass; the candlesticks of gold;
The dim far roof; the good priest purple-stoled;
My lady's throat — all these are fair to see,
And where these sounds are I am glad to be.
The simple prayers; Christ's loving kindness told;
The last note that the organ fain would hold;
A little child's hymn rising plaintively —
. . . Yet I remember . . . it was long ago . . .
In sermon-time (I think he spake of hell —
I do not know — I was not listening)
—The great west door was open wide, and lo!
I saw the grasses where the sunlight fell,
And heard a throated robin worshipping.

FRANCIS SHERMAN.

THE DUKE'S REAPPEARANCE A TRADITION.

IN those days Christopher Swetman's house, on the outskirts of Hintock village, was larger and better kept than when, many years later, it was sold to the lord of the manor adjoining; after having been in the Swetman family, as one may say, since the Conquest.

Some people would have it to be that the thing happened at the house opposite, belonging to one Childs, with whose family the Swetmans afterwards intermarried. But that it was at the original homestead of the Swetmans can be shown in various ways; chiefly by the unbroken traditions of the family, and indirectly by the

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evidence of the walls themselves, which are the only ones thereabout with windows mullioned in the Elizabethan manner, and plainly of a date anterior to the event; while those of the other house might well have been erected fifty or eighty years later, and probably were; since the choice of Swetman's house by the fugitive was doubtless dictated by no other circumstance than its then suitable loneliness.

It was a cloudy July morning just before dawn, the hour of two having been struck by Swetman's clock on the stairs. Christopher heard the strokes from his chamber, immediately at the top of the staircase, and overlooking the front of the house. He did not wonder that he was sleepless. The rumours and excitements which had latterly stirred the neighbourhood, to the effect that the rightful King of England had landed from Holland, at a port only eighteen miles to the southwest of Swetman's house, were enough to make wakeful and anxious even a contented yeoman like him. Some of the villagers, intoxicated by the news, had thrown down their scythes, and rushed to the ranks of the invader. Christopher Swetman had weighed both sides of the question, and had remained at home.

Now as he lay thinking of these and other things he fancied that he could hear the footfall of a man on the road leading up to his house—a byway, which led scarce anywhere else; and therefore a tread was at any time more apt to startle the inmates of the homestead than if it had stood in a thoroughfare. The footfall came opposite the gate, and stopped there. One minute, two minutes passed, and the pedestrian did not proceed. Christopher Swetman got out of bed, and opened the casement. "Hoi! who's there?" cries he.

"A friend," came from the darkness.

"And what mid ye want at this time o' night?" says Swetman.

"Shelter. I've lost my way."

"What's thy name?"

There came no answer.

"Be ye one of King Monmouth's men?"

"He that asks no questions will hear no lies from me. I am a stranger; and I am spent, and hungered. Can you let me lie with you to-night?"

Swetman was generous to people in trouble, and his house was roomy. "Wait a bit," he said, "and I'll come down and have a look at thee, anyhow."

He struck a light, put on his clothes, and descended, taking his horn-lantern from a nail in the passage, and lighting it before opening the door. The rays fell on the form of a tall, dark man in cavalry accoutrements and wearing a sword. He was pale with fatigue and covered with mud, though the weather was dry.

"Prithee take no heed of my appearance," said the stranger. "But let me in."

That his visitor was in sore distress admitted of no doubt and the yeoman's natural humanity assisted the other's sad importunity and gentle voice. Swetman took him in, not without a suspicion that this man represented in some way Monmouth's cause, to which he was not unfriendly in his secret heart. At his earnest request the new comer was given a suit of the yeoman's old clothes in exchange for his own, which, with his sword, were hidden in a closet in Swetman's chamber; food was then put before him and a lodging provided for him in a room at the back.

Here he slept till quite late in the morning, which was Sunday, the sixth of July, and when he came down in the garments that he had borrowed he met the house-

hold with a melancholy smile. Besides Swetman himself, there were only his two daughters, Grace and Leonard (the latter was frequently a woman's name here), and both had been enjoined to secrecy. They asked no questions and received no information; though the stranger regarded their fair countenances with an interest almost too deep. Having partaken of their usual breakfast of ham and cider he professed weariness and retired to the chamber whence he had come.

In a couple of hours or thereabout, he came down again, the two young women having now gone off to morning service. Seeing Christopher bustling about the house without assistance, he asked if he could do anything to aid his host.

As he seemed anxious to hide all differences and appear as one of themselves, Swetman set him to get vegetables from the garden and fetch water from Buttock's Spring in the dip near the house (though the spring was not called by that name till years after, by the way).

"And what can I do next?" says the stranger when these services had been performed.

His meekness and docility struck Christopher much, and won upon him. "Since you be minded to," says the latter, "you can take down the dishes and spread the table for dinner. Take a pewter plate for thyself, but the trenchers will do for we."

But the other would not and took a trencher likewise, in doing which he spoke of the two girls and remarked how comely they were.

This quietude was put an end to by a stir out of doors, which was sufficient to draw Swetman's attention to it, and he went out. Farm hands who had gone off and joined the Duke on his arrival had begun to come in with news that a midnight battle had been fought on the

moors to the north, the Duke's men, who had attacked, being entirely worsted; the Duke himself, with one or two lords and other friends, had fled, no one knew whither.

"There has been a battle," says Swetman, on coming indoors after these tidings, and looking earnestly at the stranger.

"May the victory be to the rightful in the end, whatever the issue now," says the other, with a sorrowful sigh.

"Dost really know nothing about it?" said Christopher. "I could have sworn you was one from that very battle!"

"I was here before three o' the clock this morning; and these men have only arrived now."

"True," said the yeoman. "But still, I think——"

"Do not press your question," the stranger urged. "I am in a strait, and can refuse a helper nothing; such inquiry is, therefore, unfair."

"True again," said Swetman, and held his tongue.

The daughters of the house returned from church, where the service had been hurried by reason of the excitement. To their father's questioning if they had spoken of him who sojourned there they replied that they had said never a word; which, indeed, was true, as events proved.

He bade them serve the dinner; and, as the visitor had withdrawn since the news of the battle, prepared to take a platter to him upstairs. But he preferred to come down and dine with the family.

During the afternoon more fugitives passed through the village, but Christopher Swetman, his visitor, and his family, kept indoors. In the evening, however, Swetman came out from his gate, and, harkening in silence to

these tidings and more, wondered what might be in store for him for his last night's work.

He returned homeward by a path across the mead that skirted his own orchard. Passing here, he heard the voice of his daughter Leonard expostulating inside the hedge, her words being:

"Do n't 'ee, sir; do n't! I prithee let me go!"

"Why, sweetheart?"

"Because I've a-promised another!"

Peeping through, as he could not help doing, he saw the girl struggling in the arms of the stranger, who was attempting to kiss her; but finding her resistance to be genuine, and her distress unfeigned, he reluctantly let her go.

Swetman's face grew dark, for his girls were more to him than himself. He hastened on, meditating moodily all the way. He entered the gate, and made straight for the orchard. When he reached it his daughter had disappeared, but the stranger was still standing there.

"Sir!" cried the yeomen, his anger having in no wise abated, "I've seen what has happened! I have taken 'ee into my house, at some jeopardy to myself; and, whoever you be, the least I expected of 'ee was to treat the maidens with a seemly respect. You have not done it, and I no longer trust you. I am the more watchful over them in that they are motherless; and I must ask 'ee to go after dark this night!"

The stranger seemed dazed at discovering what his impulse had brought down upon his head, and his pale face grew paler. He did not reply for a time. When he did speak his soft voice was thick with feeling.

"Sir," says he, "I own that I am in the wrong, if you take the matter gravely. We do not what we would but what we must. Though I have not injured your

daughter as a woman, I have been treacherous to her as a hostess and friend in need. I'll go, as you say ; I can do no less. I shall doubtless find a refuge elsewhere."

They walked towards the house in silence, where Swetman insisted that his guest should have supper before departing. By the time this was eaten it was dusk and the stranger announced that he was ready.

They went upstairs to where the garments and sword lay hidden, till the departing one said that on further thought he would ask another favour: that he should be allowed to retain the clothes he wore, and that his host would keep the others and the sword till he, the speaker, should come or send for them.

"As you will," said Swetman. "The gain is on my side ; for those clouts were but kept to dress a scarecrow next fall."

"They suit my case," said the stranger sadly. "However much they may misfit me, they do not misfit my sorry fortune now !"

"Nay, then," said Christopher, relenting, "I was too hasty. Sh'lt bide !"

But the other would not, saying that it was better that things should take their course. Notwithstanding that Swetman importuned him, he only added, "If I never come again, do with my belongings as you list. In the pocket you will find a gold snuff-box, and in the snuff-box fifty gold pieces."

"But keep 'em for thy use, man !" said the yeoman.

"No," says the parting guest ; "they are foreign pieces and would harm me if I were taken. Do as I bid thee. Put away these things again and take especial charge of the sword. It belonged to my father's father and I value it much. But something more common becomes me now."

Saying which, he took, as he went downstairs, one of the ash sticks used by Swetman himself for walking with. The yeoman lighted him out to the garden hatch, where he disappeared through Clammers Gate by the road that crosses Hintock Park to Evershead.

Christopher returned to the upstairs chamber, and sat down on his bed reflecting. Then he examined the things left behind, and surely enough in one of the pockets the gold snuff-box was revealed, containing the fifty gold pieces as stated by the fugitive. The yeoman next looked at the sword which its owner had stated to have belonged to his grandfather. It was two-edged, so that he almost feared to handle it. On the blade was inscribed the words "ANDREA FERARA," and among the many fine chasings were a rose and crown, the plume of the Princes of Wales, and two portraits; portraits of a man and a woman, the man's having the face of the first King Charles, and the woman's, apparently, that of his Queen.

Swetman, much awed and surprised, returned the articles to the closet, and went downstairs pondering. Of his surmise he said nothing to his daughters, merely declaring to them that the gentleman was gone; and never revealing that he had been an eye-witness of the unpleasant scene in the orchard that was the immediate cause of the departure.

Nothing occurred in Hintock during the week that followed, beyond the fitful arrival of more decided tidings concerning the utter defeat of the Duke's army and his own disappearance at an early stage of the battle. Then it was told that Monmouth was taken, not in his own clothes but in the disguise of a countryman. He had been sent to London, and was confined in the Tower.

The possibility that his guest had been no other than

the Duke made Swetman unspeakably sorry now; his heart smote him at the thought that, acting so harshly for such a small breach of good faith, he might have been the means of forwarding the unhappy fugitive's capture. On the girls coming up to him he said, "Get away with ye, wenches: I fear you have been the ruin of an unfortunate man!"

On the Tuesday night following, when the yeoman was sleeping as usual in his chamber, he was conscious of the entry of some one. Opening his eyes, he beheld by the light of the moon, which shone upon the front of his house, the figure of the stranger moving from the door towards the closet. He was dressed somewhat differently now, but the face was unmistakable in its tragical pensiveness, as was also the tallness of his figure. He neared the closet; and, feeling his visitor to be within his rights, Christopher refrained from stirring. The personage turned his large haggard eyes upon the bed where Swetman lay, and then withdrew from their hiding the articles that belonged to him, again giving a hard gaze at Christopher as he went noiselessly out of the chamber with his properties on his arm. There had seemed to be blood on his face and neck, but that might have been a fancy of the yeoman's. His retreat down the stairs was just audible, and also his departure by the side door, through which entrance or exit was easy to those who knew the place.

Nothing further happened and towards morning Swetman slept. To avoid all risk he said not a word to the girls of the visit of the night, and certainly not to any one outside the house; for it was dangerous at that time to avow anything.

Among the killed in the recent battle had been a younger brother of the lord of the manor, who lived at

the Court hard by. Seeing the latter ride past in mourning clothes next day, Swetman ventured to condole with him.

"He'd no business there!" answered the other. His words and manner showed the bitterness that was mingled with his regret. "But say no more of him. You know what has happened since, I suppose?"

"I know that they say Monmouth is taken, Sir Thomas, but I can't think it true," answered Swetman.

"O zounds! 'tis true enough," cried the Knight, "and that's not all. The Duke was executed on Tower Hill two days ago."

"D'ye say it verily?" says Swetman.

"And a very hard death he had, worse luck for 'n," said Sir Thomas. "Well, 'tis over for him and over for my brother. But not for the rest. There'll be searchings and siftings down here anon; and happy is the man who has had nothing to do with this matter!"

Now Swetman had hardly heard the latter words, so much was he confounded by the strangeness of the tidings that the Duke had come to his death on the previous Tuesday. For it had been only the night before this present day of Friday that he had seen his former guest, whom he had ceased to doubt could be other than the Duke, come into his chamber and fetch away his accoutrements as he had promised.

"It could n't have been a vision," said Christopher to himself when the knight had ridden on. "But I'll go straight and see if the things be in the closet still; and thus I shall surely learn if 'twere a vision or no."

To the closet he went, which he had not looked into since the stranger's departure. And searching behind the articles placed to conceal the things hidden, he found that, as he had never doubted, they were gone.

When the rumour spread abroad in the West that the man beheaded in the Tower was not indeed the Duke, but one of his officers taken after the battle, and that the Duke had been assisted to escape out of the country, Swetman found in it an explanation of what had so deeply mystified him. His belief in the rumour, like that of thousands of others, continued to the end of his days.

Such, briefly, is the tradition which has been handed down in Christopher Swetman's family for the last two hundred years.

THOMAS HARDY.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

MASTER of moods as dark yet fiery sweet
As the crimson heart-pulse of the glooming
beryl,

Follower of passion-haunted ways of peril
Through twilights green, where love and anguish meet;
Revealer of Beauty's ultimate deceit

Wherewith she veils herself 'neath semblance sterile
Of gray abstractions; player upon the spherul
Harmonies of love and Lord of love's heart-beat:—

Thy words are fire and dew: the tardiest flower
Leaps into blossom when thou namest it.

Close wrought as rose-bud's rose-leaves implicate
Thine imagery; and as the rose doth shower

On shivering souls wan memories, mild and sweet,
Thy verse ensnares with ardors of Love and Fate.

LEWIS E. GATES.



FAIR ROSAMOND

(AT CANINGTON.)

ALL the woods of Canington
Are gray with morning mist,
And if I pull a wild red rose,
How should the French queen wist ?
And if I pull a wild red rose
What man dare say me nay ?
(The King rides forth to Canington
At dawning of the day.)

In the woods of Canington
The birds are mating now,
And all against the windy sky
White shows the blackthorn bough.
And not a primrose spills its gold,
Or blooms a bud of May,
Yet a rose graces Canington
At dawning of the day.

In the woods of Canington
There's not a bird will sing ;
Not a rose will bud or blossom
Since all to please a King
One sweet rose has dropped and withered,
Cast its pride of place away —
(And oh, her ghost haunts Canington
At dawning of the day !)

NORA HOPPER.



FROM THE
PASSION PLAY
OF
ARNOUL GREBAN
15th century.

ALORIS, PREMIER PASTOREAU:

Il fait assés doulce saison
Pour pastoureaux, la Dieu mercy.

YSAMBERT, DEUXIÈME PASTOR-
EAU:

Se les bergiers sont de raison,
il fait assés doulce saison.

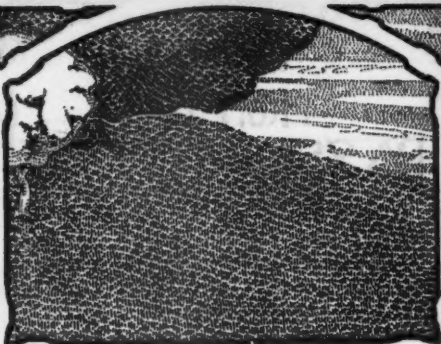
PELLION, TROISIÈME PASTOR-
EAU:

Rester ne pourroye en maison
et voir ce joyeux temps icy.

ALORIS:

Il fait assés doulce saison
pour pastoureaux, la Dieu mercy.

The verses are recited
by the Shepherd before
the announcement of
the birth of the Seigneur.
From the manuscript in
the Bibliothèque
National
Paris.



YSAMBERT :

Fi de richesse et de soucy !
Il n'est vie si bien nourrie
qui vaille estat de pastourrie.

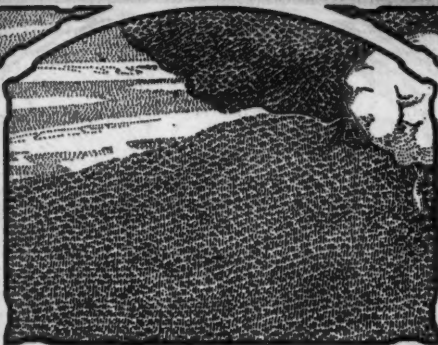
PELLION :

A gens qui s'esbatent ainsi,
Fi de richesse et de soucy !

**RIFFLART, QUATRIÈME PASTOR-
EAU :**

Je suis bien des vostres aussi
atout ma barbete fleurie :
quand j'ay du pain mon saoul,
je crye :
fi de richesse et de soucy !





ALORIS:

Il n'est vie si bien nourrie
qui vaille estat de pastourrie.

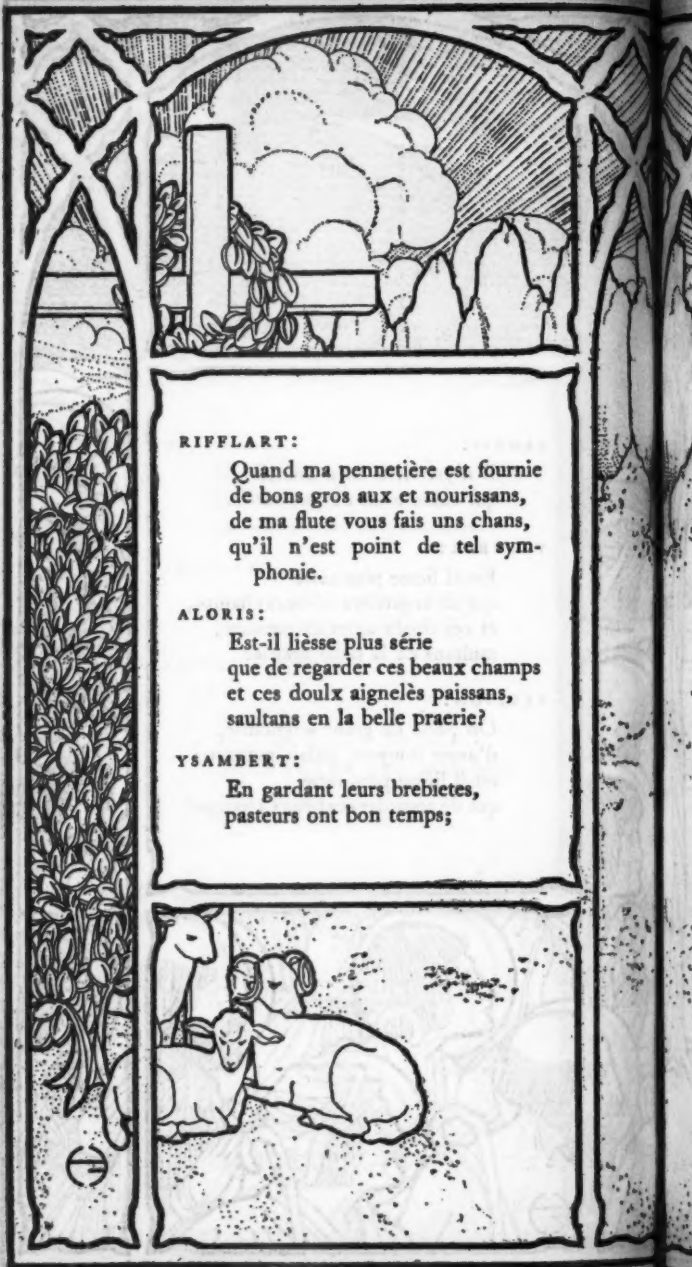
YSAMBERT:

Est-il lièsse plus série
que de regarder ces beaux champs,
et ces doulx aignelès paissans,
saultans en la belle prairie?

PELLION:

On parle de grant seignourie,
d'avoir donjons, palais puissans;
est-il lièsse plus série
que de regarder ces beaux champs?





RIFFLART:

Quand ma pennetière est fournie
de bons gros aux et nourissans,
de ma flute vous fais uns chans,
qu'il n'est point de tel sym-
phonie.

ALORIS:

Est-il lièsse plus série
que de regarder ces beaux champs
et ces doux aignelès paissans,
saultans en la belle prairie?

YSAMBERT:

En gardant leurs brebietes,
pasteurs ont bon temps;



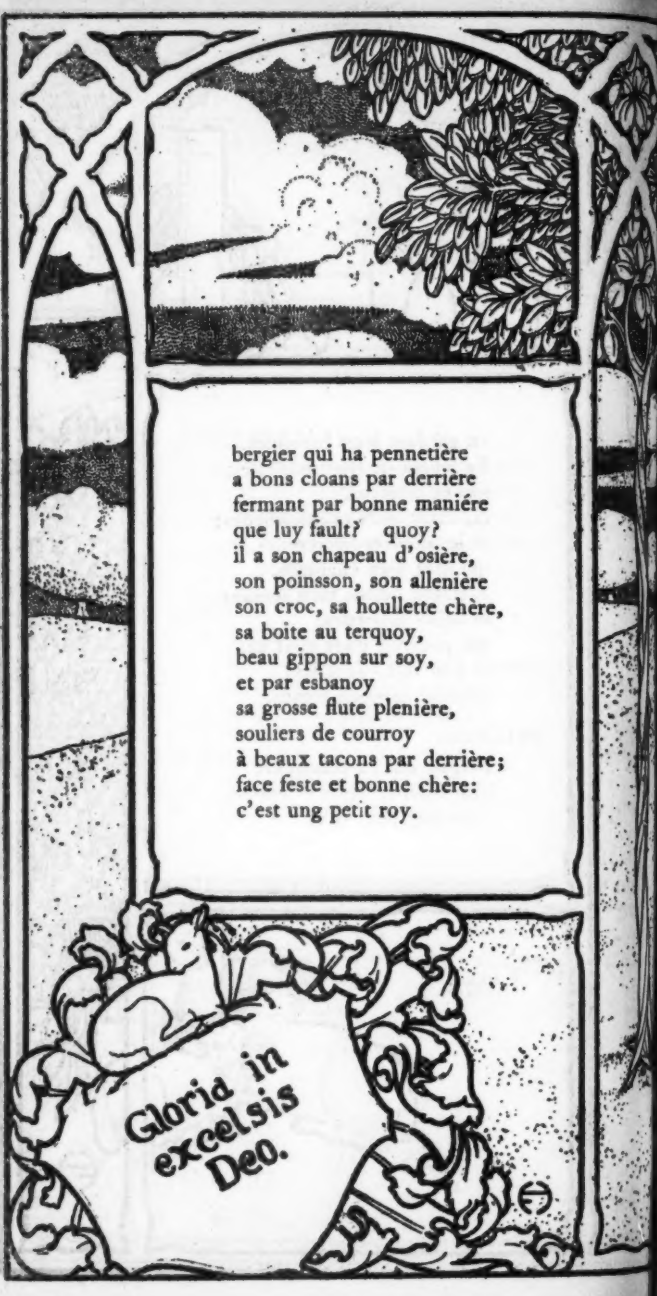


en gardant leurs brebietes,
 ilz jouent de leurs musettes,
 liés et esbatans,
 là, dient leurs chansonnettes;
 et les doulces bergerettes,
 qui sont bien chantans,
 cueillent herbes bien sentans
 et belles fleurettes;
 qui pourroit vivre cent ans
 et voir telz baguettes!
 pasteurs ont bon temps.

PELLION:

Bergier qui ha pennet ère
 bien cloant, ferme et entière
 c'est ung petit roy;





bergier qui ha pennetière
a bons cloans par derrière
fermant par bonne manière
que luy fault? quoy?
il a son chapeau d'osièrre,
son poinsson, son allenière
son croc, sa houlette chère,
sa boîte au terquoy,
beau gippon sur soy,
et par esbanoy
sa grosse flute plenièrre,
souliers de courroy
à beaux tacons par derrière;
face feste et bonne chère:
c'est ung petit roy.

Gloria in
excelsis
Deo.

A CHRISTMAS GARLAND

WOVEN BY MAX BEERBOHM

*[Since the death of Charles Dickens, Christmas, as a literary motive, has declined sadly. It seemed to me that a renewal of that good motive might dispel some, at least, of the morbid vapours which involve our literature. So I appealed to many of our best essayists and romancers. Some were, others were not, susceptible. What follows is a mere selection from the writings I garnered. As I correct the proofs, I venture to think that the little movement has been a success. Not one of the writers seems to have fallen below his or her level, and some have even risen above it. Mr. M**r**d**th*, for example, and Mr. M**cl**r**n* seem to have written more clearly, I myself more sincerely, than usual. And Mrs. M**n**ll, in the festivity of her theme, has been betrayed into an unwonted warmth of style, which will not alienate her admirers, I hope.—M. B.]*

THE SORROWS OF MILLICENT

A CHRISTMAS CAMEO

A WOMAN was hastening through the frozen streets of London on the Eve of Christmas last.

Over her head and all around her slender frame was stretched a threadbare shawl, tattered in places and with edges sadly frayed. Little could be seen of her face, save that it was chiselled in the delicate way so rare among our "upper" classes. She had dark, lustrous eyes, charged with the awakening wonder of an earlier world, and which were fringed with long lashes. To her breast she hugged something that was very small, very still, precious exceedingly. Ever and again she sought to wrap her shawl more closely round it, lest some stray,

chill snowflake should alight upon it. Closed carriages with gaudy coronets smeared over the panels dashed past and covered her with mud. Several "Mashers," who had strutted out of their clubs with cigars between their coarse lips, drawled out as she passed, "By George! there's a doosidly pwetty gal." But the woman was too injured to the insults of the world to heed them. The snow was very cold to her feet, though overhead the sky was now clear and star-spangled, and over its vast surface floated a moon of silver unalloyed.

As the woman entered the hallowed precincts of Grosvenor Square she looked up eagerly at the numbers, as one searching for a particular house. At last she came to the portico of No. 205.* Through the open door came a riot of light from numerous electric globes, and down the stone steps was unrolled a drugget, for fear the high-heeled shoes of the ladies and gentlemen should be contaminated by contact with the paving-stones. Lightly, and as to the manner born, the woman ascended the steps. The lackeys sought to bar her entrance, but one look from her eyes was enough to show them, pampered fools though they were, that she was, in the true sense of the word, a lady. The odour of rich cooking told her where the dining-room was. She entered it.

At the foot of the table sat a corpulent man with a crimson countenance — Blackheart, the great critic. At the head sat his connubial spouse, a timid, bullied-looking lady. And down each side were ranged a great company of their aristocratic guests. They were just falling to on the *entremets*, when the strange, ill-clad figure, swept into the room.

Blackheart dropped his knife and fork with an oath.

* I have purposely given a false number here. The Public, however, will not be slow to guess the real one.—M. C.

"'Ow dare you admit that—that person?" he stormed to his servants. "Turn 'er hout!"

"I must request you to suffer me to speak, sir," said the woman in a clear, sweet voice of exquisite refinement. "You know well enough who I am. It may be that you, ladies and gentlemen, do not. I am her who your host has neglected and whose being he has ignored. I have come to force him to recognize me, on this sacred night, and to recognize that which I carry in my arms, dearer than life to me! I only ask for justice!"

Here she threw back her shawl from her shoulders, and held out towards the master of the house the precious burden she had been carrying—a little, cloth-bound burden with a gold design on the front cover, and bearing the title, "The Coat of Many Colours, by Millicent Coral, 15th edition." Millicent—for she it was!—stood there before the company in an attitude of sweetest, proudest humility. It was seen, now that she had discarded her shawl, that she was clad in rich black velvet, with a point-lace *fichu* round her snow-white throat. The guests were silent in her marvellous presence. Only Blackheart—who had received a large *douceur* not to review her book and been promised a royalty of 15 per cent. on every copy not sold after the hundredth thousand †—was unmoved.

"Be haff with you!" he shouted. But his plethoric tones were drowned in a great unanimous roar of voices from without. "Do justice to Millicent Coral!" they were crying in a chorus as of thunder. The British Public had assembled in the Square, warm and staunch of heart, and were not going to be trifled with. Through the windows came a volley of stones and other missives, crashing down among the shivered plates and glasses. The hostess and her ashen-faced guests fled screaming to

† A fact.—M. C.

an upper room. Blackheart alone remained, sheltering himself beneath the table. Millicent walked fearlessly to the window, unheeding of the stones hurtling around her, but which always glanced aside from her, and, falling at her feet, turned to coruscating gems — pearls, rubies, and other precious jewels. She held up her hand smilingly, and called upon her Public to cease, which they straightway did.

Blackheart, who feared and hated the Public as all critics do, would not come out from his shelter. But his heart was still hard as the stones he so feared.

"Not one bloomin' line will you get hout of me for your precious book," he hissed through a hole in the table-cloth.

"I have sought to move you," said Millicent calmly, "by humbling myself. My Public has threatened your life, and I have saved you. There is yet one other persuasion."

She drew from her bosom that which she had received that morning — an autograph letter from the Secretary of a Great Personage. "*His Royal Highness*," she read aloud, "*directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your book, and to say that he anticipates reading it with much pleasure.*"

There was a great silence beneath the table. The critic's soul had been shaken with terror and amazement to its utter depths. A Greater than he had spoken with no uncertain voice. Who was he (Blackheart) that he could fly in the face of the Highest Critic in the Land?

He crawled out through the legs of a chair, and held out his hands for the copy of Millicent's book.

"I do not," said the young Authoress, "give away copies for review. You must purchase it in the ordinary manner. Six shillings net."

Blackheart produced the money with a good grace, received the book from Millicent's fair hands, and sat down, blue pencil in hand, to read it for review.

And Millicent, in all her young and radiant beauty, swept into the hall, and passed through the bowing footmen to the door. And when the Public outside saw their dear one on the steps they raised a wild cheer that rent the cerulean arc of heaven; but scarce did they dare to look upon her countenance, for it was as the face of an Angel.

M*RIE C*R*LLI.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF APPLE-PIE BEDS.

IT was Yule-Day Eve and the Poet was doing his hair. All the guests in the great, strange house where he was staying, had gone to their white beds, weary of their revels, save some sterner males who were keeping the holy vigil of Nicotine. The Poet had been invited to help them keep it, but he had other things to do that night, let alone that the cigarettes in that house were very strong and might prevail. So he was standing before his mirror alone. One by one, he entwined the curl-papers in his hair, till they looked, he thought, just like the tiny waxen candles in the great Christmas Tree downstairs. "But I must n't light them," he murmured. "For they are the only paper-money I have." And he smiled at his own fancy.

He had passed a very merry evening with the rest, although there were none there who were wise, and but one who was beautiful. This sweet exception was named Beatrice, and she was yet a school-maiden, being, indeed, not past that year which is devoted to blushing. But blushes, like blush-roses, are rather becoming. At least, the Poet thought so. And when all the presents

had been given, and all the poor crackers had been pulled in twain, he had sat him down beside the damsel—or damozel, as he liked to call her—and had told her fairy-notions for much more than an hour. Nor would he suffer her to flee from him when she said he was aweary, but began to tell her another. Ere he had finished it, she said to him suddenly, “How do you manage to think of all these things, I wonder?”

“I dream them abed,” he answered her. “It is always abed that I dream them. To-night I will dream many more—all for you. And I will tell you them to-morrow morning, in some cosy nook.”

Beatrice drooped her eyes in thought.

“Do you know what apple-pie beds are?” she asked him presently in a kind of casual way.

“Alas! I am sadly simple,” said the Poet. “You must teach me.”

“I will with pleasure,” she replied, with eyes all bright. “But not now.”

“Ah, do!” he pleaded. “Are they at all like apple-pies; I hope they are. For apple-pies are even as little roofed-in orchards, and oh! the sweet delight to steal in through that soft roof and rob them!” And when she would not tell him what these strange beds really were, he chaffed her gently for her coyness. (That wondrous chaff that comes from lovers’ lips! Were I a rich merchant, I would “make a corner” in such chaff, more valuable surely than much grain!) When he would have resumed his unfinished fairy-notion, she told him it was her bedtime and left him there whispering her name. Nor was it long afterwards that he and the other grown-ups said good-night to one another.

You see, he was eager to sleep early, that he might dream many things for his Beatrice. So as soon as he

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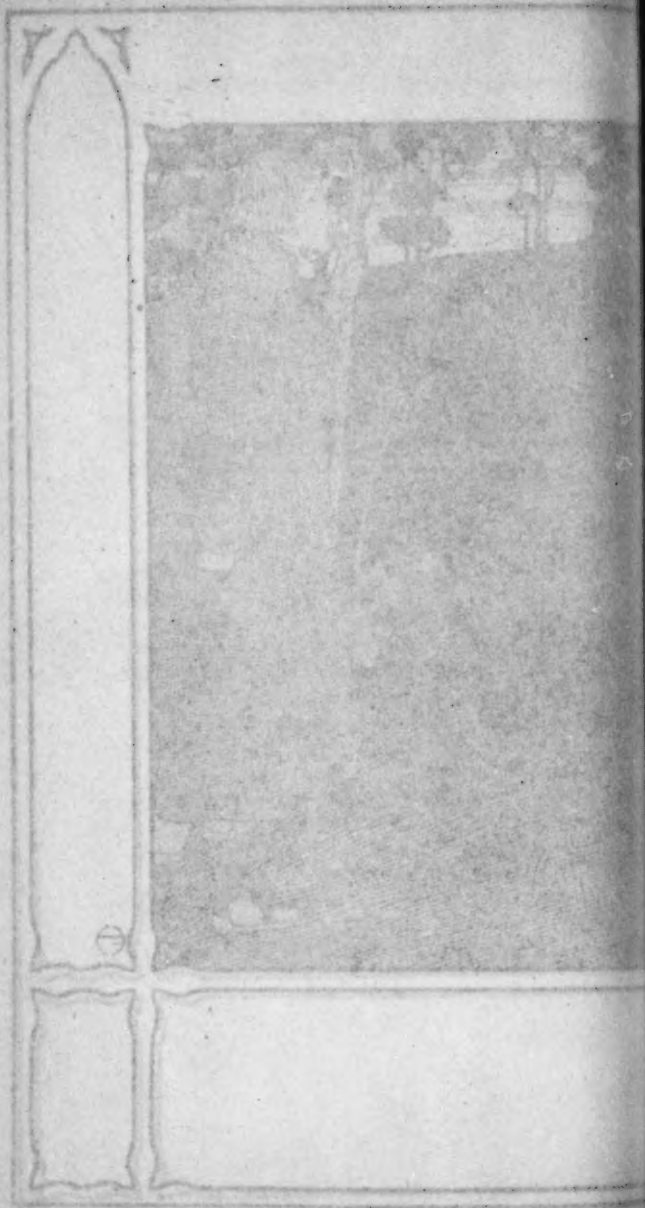
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had done his hair he put from him swiftly all his apparel and donned the white shroud of sleep. But lo! as he was slipping in between the sheets, his feet were strangely hindered. In vain he sought to stretch forth his limbs. "May be," he cried, "the servant who made the bed for me thought I had no body, but a soul only." With his own hands he strove to order the sheets according to his fancy, but alas! so simple was he in such tasks that he availed nothing, but rather made things worse.

A very happy idea came to him. Why need he go to bed at all? Surely he could dream his notions at that little writing-table yonder! It would be better so, for then he could write them all down as he dreamt them, with one of those great quills that had been torn from some poor dead goose's back. So he sat him down, and very soon beautiful words were quietly following one another over his hostess' note-paper. When, at eight of the clock, a maid came and knocked at his door, he was writing the last sentence of the tenth notion. How many thousands of words he had written I should not dare to say, but there were a great, great many.

The Poet looked a little wan as he entered the dining-room. Some of the guests were already gently breaking their fast. Among them was little Beatrice. Was it but his fancy, or did she blush, as he came in? He could hardly make sure, so quickly did she hide her face in her tea-cup. Ere he greeted the lady of the house, he stole softly round to the maiden's chair and whispered in her ear, "I not only dreamt ten beautiful things, but have got them in my pocket, all written down for you! I won't be long over my breakfast."

Beatrice, when he came round to her, had still been holding her tea-cup to her lips. But, as he told her his glad tidings, she dropped it with a crash, and all the tea

ran out over the tablecloth — like a golden carpet spread upon white snow, the Poet thought.

R*CH*RD L* G*LL*NN*

THE DEFOSSILIZED PLUM-PUDDING.

“**H**AVE some more of that stuff?” asked Simpson, hoisting his club-foot onto a vacant chair, and passing his long, bony fingers down the scar that runs vertically from his forehead to his chin.

“I do n’t mind if I do,” I answered, and he gave me another help.

I do not exactly know why I always dine with Simpson on Christmas Day. Neither of us likes the other. He thinks me a dreamer, and for some reason I never trust him, though he is undoubtedly the most brilliant Pantaeschrologist of his day, and we had been contemporaries at the F. R. Z. S. It is possible that he dislikes me, and I him, less than does anybody else. And to this may be due our annual festivity in his luxurious rooms in Gower street.

“Have some of this sherry,” muttered Simpson, pushing towards me a decanter which his deformed butler had placed before him. “You’ll find it middling.”

I helped myself to a glass and smoothing out my shirt-front, (Simpson is one of those men who “dress,”) settled myself in my chair.

“Notice anything odd about that pudding?” he asked, with a searching glance through his double-convex glasses.

“No,” I said simply, “I thought it very good.”

A gleam of grim pleasure came out of his face. I knew from this that the annual yarn was coming. Simpson is the most enthralling talker I ever met, but some-

how I always go to sleep before he is half-way through. I did so, the year before, when he told me about "The Carnivorous Mistletoe," and the year before that, when he told me "The Secret of the Sinister Crackers," and another time, when his theme was "The Microbes in the Yule Log." It vexed him very much every time, and he pooh-poohed my excuses. I was determined it should not occur again.

"I am glad you liked the pudding," he said. "Pardon my inhospitality in not keeping you company, while you ate. Tobacco is a good preventive against indigestion. You can light up."

I did so.

"You have heard of fossilized substances?" Simpson began, in that rasping voice so familiar to his pupils at the S.V.P.

I nodded across my briar.

"Well," he continued, "it has always been a pet theory of mine that, just as a substance can, by the action of certain alkaloids operating in the course of time, become, to all purposes, metallic, so—you follow me—it can, in like manner, be restored to its previous condition. You have heard of plum-puddings being kept for twenty-one years?"

I nodded; less, I am afraid, in assent than owing to a physical cause.

"Well," I heard him saying, "the stuff that you have eaten to-night is about two hundred and fifty years old and may be much more than that, at a very moderate computation."

I started. Simpson had raised his voice rather suddenly. He took my start for surprise and continued wagging his crippled forefinger at me, "That pudding was originally a cannon-ball. It was picked up on the

field of Naseby. Never mind how I came by it. It has been under treatment in my laboratory for the last ten years.

"Ten years," I muttered. "Ten . . . seems almost impossible."

"For ten years," he resumed, "I have been testing, acidizing . . . thing began to decompose under my very . . . at length . . . brown, pulpy substance, such as you might . . . sultanas . . .

. . . Now comes in the curious part of the . . .

How long after I don't know, I was awoken by a vicious kick from Simpson's club-foot.

"You brute!" I cried, you drugged that sherry!"

"Faugh!" he sneered, "you say that every year!"

H. G. W*LLS.

BESIDE THE BONNIE MARK.

WE are a sober, duty-seeking people in the Brompton Road, which I will call the Rood tae Brompton, as being more convenient to the ear. Folk say there's "nae a mickle feck o' Romaunce in our composeesh'n," and may be they are not in error, for we have such a deal to mind for the temporal welfare of us that we have not heart for the rest. But for all that the Lord prospers our goings and our comings, and lets us take our chance of thanking Him, knowing we are pressed at the most times.

Therefore we live at peace one with the other and indulge ourselves neighbourly on occasion. And if you are reflectfully-minded you'll not be considering that a justification of wrath, inasmuch as a soul cannot dispense with friendliness all the while. As we say in the Rood tae Brompton, "Let a mon peckit (finish) his sixteen

thoos'n wairds i' the day an' spen' a bit prackle wi' hiss likes the sundoon an' trust tae the morn to feg the dickalecht (put in the dialect)." But what I am telling is one of those bits of sunshine that are granted us in spite of our own selves to give light to our tasks and labours.

The shop I live over above is a wee tobacco store, much favoured by smokers for their edification. It is kept by one Mrs. Jones, a Southron, clean and orderly, but with too much flint to the heart of her for some tastes. Here I came to dwell by reason of the braw laddie that stands before her door. My heart assured me there could be no lack of grace in his companionship for a'. You have noticed him yourselves in passing, may be, but I cannot help myself from enlarging on him. A man of the medium height, bearing his bonnet well up, as is becoming to a Clansman, and looks you straight out of shrewd, gray eyes. His red coat is not so bonnie as it once was, owing to the rain, for he stands out stoutly and hardily in all weathers; he knows that rain is sent down from Heaven, so does not seek to shelter his finery. He has a snuff-horn in his hand, but is a lesson to some of us in abstemiousness, though he is but a poor wooden image made in the likeness of a man, as you may be guessing.

Now whensoever I am at a loss for a profitable word in my writing, my habit is to look down out window at this laddie for my inspiration. He is a trusty vessel of help to my toiling. And it chanced (as folk say, meaning Providence) that one day as I looked down at him, needful of some aid in the ordering of an important deathbed-farewell, I spied a lassie gazing at him with eyes of approval and a bonny blush to her cheek. She was but a wee bairn, not wise enough to know he was

an image, and presently she began to address him softly with a "Will ye no hecht the wha' wi' hagger fro' the puir freckie (orphan) the noo?" and a "Gin yir pouk spinner the day a ken dune me aild fa' the awfu' saptit wi' a!" I took down all that she said and put it into the mouth of my dying man, Hamish Domferrar, peace be to him!

Thereafter I saw her most days, standing in the cold wintry street with a great growing love in her wee blue eyes. And now or again I would spare a moment from my toil to go down and hold converse with her. She told me her name was Elspeth Macintosh (Waterproof) and that she came from Kirkochry. And she would pour out to me the great love she had for the braw Clansman, being confidentially-minded, as is the way of those stricken in love. Insomuch that my heart was fulfilled with the balm of affliction, and I was not for undeceiving her that the Clansman was made of the wood of trees, Heaven forgive me for my deceitfulness! And every morn she would stand there trying to coax him to be her ain mon. "Am a nae bonnie ka spune sic ilka mysel' na siller ma hert awa'?" she would say with the tears rolling down her cheeks like the waters of Gildech Nimshi.

Christmas Tide came, filling the hearts of us with peace and kindness, and Christmas morn found the bairn still standing disconsolate on the causeway. For you must know that the shop is kept open even on that Day. The poor in substance must needs serve at all times, which is the Will of Providence. And as I passed out on my way to Kirk, my heart was mightily uplifted with a great compassion for the puir freckie. And when I heard the words of love she was speaking to the dumb

image, "A'm nau forrit (forward) wi' ma puckle gran' pecktic o' gude me verra ane cud mair hoots to dunner syne frae haggis!" I could not contain my own emotions at the sound. "I'll mek her joyfu' the day," I whispered. Warily I peeped round to see if Mrs. Jones was at the counter, and I thanked Providence she was not there to see, but in the wee parlour at back. Then I beckoned the bairn to come near and I lifted the Clansman with my own arms, saying to her, "His hert is yir awe, to be yir ane mon. D'yir mind yir can tek him awa' wi' yir the noo?"

And the bairn, being braw and strapping, caught him in her embrace and dragged him away along the street, as fast as fast as she could, for all he was heavy to the touch. "I ha bided mickle fa' my breedal," she called back to me, "an' I'm na ingrat, bu' my hert is chocksome the noo an' I'm a' for spicklin' my ain mon frae——." I never heard the rest, for at that moment a braw constable laid his hand on her and took her ain mon from her arms. "Yir mus' een kim along wi' me tae the Steesh'n," he said.

We are a law-loving people in the Rood tae Brompton, though our hearts be soft at whiles. I was called as a witness at the Court the morrow and I was made to tell the evidence of my eyes, how I saw the bairn remove the image and did not interfere, thinking she had come to fetch it away to the renovators. And so the puir lassie was cast into the prison-house. I ha' nae doot she deed i' her plankit-beddie, wi' the ould Chaplain sayin' the wairds o' Comfort fa' the deein' an' the sun sheenin' doon on her wan coont'nance an'—but there, I ha' writ eno' an' I musna scarrut (waste) ma materrial.

I*N M*CL*R*N.

HOLLY

THERE is a form of exclusion that is peculiar to one feast. Through the year you may garnish your house with the variable excess of its garden. "Fragrance is the wisdom of a room," it has been well said by a living poet. Not less does the room draw temperament from the colour of its flowers. And she is a foolish housewife who denies it the double attribute. Her task is of selection. Frost, rain, the diffusion or occultation of the sun's rays, the improvisable chances of climate, are the only arbiters of her material. The incident of Christmas is the check on her discrimination. In piety, she must reject from her house all plants, save some that are appropriate in usage. But not for long may the house keep its devotional look. Twice six days is the right span. Thereafter, the walls must be stripped. A strange bareness commemorates, not unduly, the term of the feast. The vases take back their complement of ordinary flowers, that seem, after the warmer symbols, to chill us with their unmeaning. It is not yet that we are recaptivated by their mere prettiness.

The inveterate power of holly is that we miss it. We feel when it is not there that the flat landscapes or uncomely forbears on the wall were dignified by its circumference. Nor had the orb of enspiced suet been tolerable but for its erect sprig. For the leaves had, in the dark radiance of their curves, their message of psychic joy, different for each one. Youths and maidens, it may well be, approve the pale plant that overhangs the bestowal of cursory salutes. But the child, yet unheedful of mature modes, cares rather for holly. To small fingers the keen points of the leaves yield their content of adventure. Never so clearly as at this season may we

gauge the charm that peril has for immature minds. See the child as he snatches the dried grape from its enthralling flame! Poor is the reward of the palate. Nor does the hand, in its prehensibility, escape a sad charring. Yet does he persist. Under the same impulse, he inclines to holly, for the sake of the pain it holds in its symbolic spears. Holly has, too, in a greater or less degree, his dearest colour. He values the plant for its crude accompaniment of berries. But the good housewife will not regret the sparse incidence of these things, in whose plenty superstition sees the exact omen of an unkind season.

AL*CE M**N*LL.

THE VICTORY OF APHASIA GIBBERISH.

IN the heart of insular Cosmos, remote by some scores of leagues of hodge-trod arable or pastoral—not more than a snuff-pinch to gaping tourist nostrils accustomed to inhalation of prairie-winds, but enough for perspective—from those marginal sands, trident-scraped, we are to fancy, by a helmeted Dame Abstract, familiarly profiled on discs of current bronze, price of a loaf for humbler maws disdainful of Gallic side-dishes for the titillation of choicer palates, stands Gibberish Park, a house of some pretension, mentioned at Runnymede, with the spreading exception of wings given to it in latter times by Daedalean masters not to be balked of billiards or traps for Terpsichore, and owned for unbroken generations by a healthy line of procreant Gibberishes, to the undoing of collateral branches eager for the birth of a female. Passengers in cushioned chambers flying through space, top-speed or dallying with obscure platforms not alighted at apparently, have had it pointed out to them, as beheld dimly for a privileged instant and then forgotten, for the

most part, as they sink back behind crackling barrier of instructive paper, with a "Thank you, Sir," or "Madam," as the case may be. Guide books praise it. I conceive they shall be studied for a cock-shy of rainbow epithets slashed in at the target of Landed Gentry, premonitorily. The tintinnabulation's enough. Periodical footings of Gibberishes in Mayfair or the Tyrol, signalled by the slide from its mast of a crested index of *Æolian* caprice, blazon of their presence, gives the curious a right to spin through the halls and galleries under a cackle of housekeeper guideship, scramble for a chuck of the dainties, dog fashion. There is something to be said for the rope's twist. Wisdom skips.

It is probable that the goblins of this same Lady Wisdom were all ajostle one Christmas morning between the doors of the house and the village church, which crouches on the outskirt of the Park with something of a lodge in its look, they may have whispered, more than of *cœlestial* twinkles, even with Christmas hoarfrost bleaching the grey of it in sunlight, as one sees imaged on seasonable missives for amity in the trays marked "sixpence and upwards," here and there, on the counters of barter. Be sure these goblins made obeisance to Mr. Gasbury Gibberish, as he passed by, starched beacon of squirearchy, wife on arm, son to heel. After them, members of the household, rose-chapped males and females, carrying books of worship. The pack of rogues glance up the drive with nudging elbows and whisperings of "Where is Aphasia? Where is the betrothed of Sir Rhombus?"

Off they scamper for a peep through the windows of the house. They throng the sill of the library, ears acock and eyelids twittering admiration of a prospect. Aphasia was in view of them — essence of her.

Sir Rhombus was at her side. Nothing slips the goblins.

"Nymph in the Heavy Dragoons," was Mrs. Cryptic-Sparkler's famous description of her. The County took it for final—an unset stone with a fleck in the heart of it. Aphasia commended the imagery.

She had breadth. Heels that sent ample curves over the grounds she stood on, and hands that could floor you with a clinch of them, were hers. Brown eyes looked down at you from swelling temples that were lost in a ruffling copse of hair. Square chin, cleft centrally, gave her throat the look of a tower with a gun protrudent at top. Her nose was virginal, with hints of the Iron Duke at most angles. Pink oyster covering pearls must serve for her mouth. She was dressed for church, seemingly, but seemed no slave to Time. Her bonnet was pushed to the back of her head, and she was handling the ribbons. One saw she was a woman. She inspired deference.

"Forefinger for Shepherd's Crook" was Mrs. Cryptic-Sparkler's phrase for St. Rhombus. Let it go at that.

"You have Prayer Book!" he queried.

She nodded. Juno catches the connubial trick.

"Hymns?"

"Ancient and Modern."

"I may share with you?"

"I know them by heart. Parrots sing."

"Philomel carols," he bent to her.

"Complaints spoil a festival." She turned aside. There was a silence as of virgin Dundee or Madeira susceptible of the knify incision.

"Time speeds," said Sir Rhombus, with a jerk at the clock.

"We may dodge the scythe."

"To be choked with the sands?"

She flashed a smile.

"Lady! Your father has started."

"He knows the aphorism. Copy-books instil."

"It would not be well that my Aphasia should enter after the absolution," he pursued.

She cast her eyes to the carpet. He caught them at the rebound.

"It snows," she said, swimming to the window.

"A flake. Not more. The season claims it."

"I have thin boots."

"Another pair! . . ."

"My maid buttons. She is at Church."

"My fingers?"

"Twelve on each!"

"Five," he corrected.

"Buttons . . ."

"I beg your pardon."

She saw opportunity. She swam to the bell-rope and grasped it for a tinkle. The action spread feminine curves to her lover's eye. He was a man.

Obsequiousness loomed in the doorway. Its mistress flashed an order for Port—two glasses.

Sir Rhombus sprang a pair of eyebrows on her. Suspicion slid down the banister of his mind, trailing a blue ribbon. Inebriates were one of his studies. For a second, she was sunset.

"Medicinal!" she murmured.

"Forgive me, madam! . . . A glass. Certainly. 'Twill warm us for worshipping."

The wine appeared, seemed to blink owlishly through the facets of the decanter, reminding one of a hoary captive brought forth into light from subterraneous dimness, something of querulousness in the sudden liberation of it.

Or say that it gleamed benignant from its tray, steady-borne by the hands of reverence, as one has seen Infallibility pass with uplifting of jewelled fingers through genuflexions of the Balcony. Port has this in it, that it compels obeisance, master of us; as distinguishable from brother or sister wines, wooing us with a coy flush in the gold of them to a cursory tope or harlequin-leap shimmering up the veins with a sly wink at us through eye-lets. Hussey-vintages swim to a cossat. We go to Port, mark you!

Sir Rhombus sipped, with a snap of lips over the rim. He said, "One scents the cobwebs."

"Catches in them!" Aphasia flung at him.

"I take you. Bacchus laughs in the web."

"Unspun, but for Pallas!"

"A lady's jealousy!"

"Forethought, rather!"

"Brewed in the paternal pate. Grant it."

"For a spring in accoutrements."

Sir Rhombus inclined gravely. Port precludes prolongment of riposte. He glanced at his time-piece, whistled. "A smart step will bring us for a second lesson, special lesson. Christmas. The Magi." The wine nudged his memory.

Aphasia motioned him to the decanter. The action switched him. He filled, meditatively; returned to chair.

"The Litany is better," she murmured.

"We must not miss it. Three minutes and we start."

"At gallop."

"I am of a mood for kneeling." He drained his glass with an affectionate twirl at the stem. Aphasia eyed him curiously.

"Laid down by my grandfather," she said. "Clois-
tral."

He swam to the decanter, unsteadily.

"Queer," he muttered, scrutinizing the stopper.
"No date on it. Antediluvian. Sound, though."

"Fill up!"

He filled. "Here 's to you!"

She sparkled.

"With your permission!" he said, refilling. "Fin-
ish it under table. Genius of Port demands it. . . .
Pretty carpet. . . . Revolving pattern."

G**RGE M*R*D*TH.

A VAIN CHILD.

HOW very delightful Struwwelpeter is! For all its crude translation and cheap aspect, it has indeed the sentiment of style, and it reveals, with surer delicacy than does any other record, the spirit of a German Christmas Day. Over the first page presides an angel with bunt wings, such as were fashionable in the Empress Augusta's period. There stand, on her either side, studded with tapers and erect among pink clouds, two patulous Christmas trees, from beneath whose shade two smaller angels sprinkle toys for good children. A delightful group! Hoffmann guides me, as Mephisto, Faust, through all the nurseries of that childish world. He shows me those under-sized, sharp-featured, bright-tunicked children, mocking the blackamoor along the flowered pathway, or fidgeting at table, or refusing soup. At his word, a door springs open for the furial inrush of that tailor who does ever dock miscreant thumbs, and Harriet, also, *avidis circumdata flammis*, comes flying from her great folly. Struwwelpeter himself does not please me. His tangled

density of chevelure and meek exposure of interminable nails, his ill-made tunic and green gaiters, make altogether a quite repellent picture. More pleasing to seek those gracious pages traversed by Johnny's history ! The landscape there is nothing but a lamp-post and some cobble-stones ; the boy *très dégagé*, his chin aloft, his combed hair fugient in the breeze, one scarlet boot advanced, the fingers of one hand outstretched, under his arm a book of bright scarlet. These or those, it may be of my readers do not remember the story of his strange immersion, and for their sake I will rehearse it, briefly. Johnny was ever wont to ignore the pavement, the grass of his treading ; curlous, rather of the flight of birds or of the clouds' ordering, περιφρονῶν τὸν ἥλλον. Once from the river that was their home, three little fishes saw him and marvelled at his mien, nor were they surprised, but frightened only when he fell among them. Long on the surface of the water lay he, finless and immobile, till he was retrieved by "two strong men," was set by their hands upon the dyke. And, as he stood there, a poor cascade of water, the three fishes swam to the water's surface, mocking him, for lo ! the scarlet book that was his treasure had been swept far from him and lost in further waters.

It is now quite fifteen years since my nurse read to me this tragedy, but time has not made it less poignant. At school, at Oxford, often, often, did I wonder what was written in Johnny's scarlet book, who were his saviours, whether 'twas indeed transcendent whimsy that merged him in the sudden waters, or whether, in the language of our rural police he had anything on his mind ? Last spring, though, I chanced to stay for a few days in Frankfort, Hoffmann's city. Here, I thought, I might pierce the mysteries of that old disaster. As I passed

through the streets, I seemed to recognize Johnny's mature features over every grey beard. I made inquiries. None knew Johnny. In my distracted wandering, I did, at length, find the dyke, the cobble-stone, the lamp-post, just as Hoffmann had drawn them, but, though I had the river dragged for many hours, the remnant of no scarlet book rose to the surface. I left Frankfort in some annoyance. Wearied with research, I slept soundly in the train, and, in a dream, sleep gave me, found the secret of my vain quest. In a dream, I saw myself strutting, even as Johnny had strutted, a creature of high and insolent carriage, bearing beneath my arm a scarlet book, labelled "The Works of Max Beerbohm." No heed was I giving to the realities of life around me, as I strutted on. Before my feet lay a river that was the river of Journalism, and from the surface of its water three inkstained fishes were gaping at me. In a tragic instant, I had fallen among them. I awoke shivering.

Yes! Hoffmann's tale had been an allegory, a subtle prophecy of my own estate. Need one clinch the parallel; I was, of yore, a haughty and remote artist, careless how little I earned in writing perfect things, writing but quarterly. Now, in the delusion that editors, loving the pauper, will fill his pockets, I write for a weekly paper, and call myself "We." But the stress of anonymity overwhelms me. I belong to the Beerbohm period. I have tumbled into the dark waters of current journalism, and am glad to sign my name,

MAX BEERBOHM.



NOTES

I TAKE some credit to myself for having unearthed what is quite the most comical of our more serious magazines. In the wild obscurity of Franklin, Ohio, there is printed and published a monthly journal, called *The Editor*. It is "a journal of information for literary workers," that is to say, it keeps a keen and watchful eye on the misdoings of editors and publishers; it collects literary debts, and it dribbles over with such advice and suggestion as the scribbling tyro likes most to disregard. The mere fact that you and I have never heard of *The Editor* before need not prejudice us. "In each number," it says, "we shall tell you of some publication of which you have not previously known and which may be a market for just the material you have to offer." There is to my unaccustomed ear something active and business-like about that proposal. I like such a frank, decisive way of checking the sentiment and romance young America is so full of. Your literary novice of twenty steals out at dusk with thumping heart to slip into the mail-box his treatise on the "Advantages of the Republican over the Monarchical Form of Government." When the *North American Review* returns it to him, he is cast down. All those visions of Boston holding out her arms to him, of the great and good of New York smothering him with invitations, present sudden and startling difficulties of realization. And yet Macaulay had all London at his feet at twenty-four with his inflated essay on Milton. (By the by, though it has little to do with the subject, boys ought not to be allowed to read the biographies of any men who have succeeded before forty. These precocious geniuses are as demoralising in the subtlety of their appeals to idleness as a room-

ful of babies.) The novice, repulsed by the *North American Review*, burns his essay or converts it into pipe spills. He becomes for the time a useless and disreputable member of society, with thoughts turning savagely to the extreme of pork-packing. That picture of the wronged one who suffers much but will not complain, of the rare spirit condemned to punch hogs in a stockyard, has been seen and drawn by most of us. To the tyro in this despondent state then comes *The Editor*, buoyant and consoling. It talks cheerfully of "a market." It tells touching anecdotes of editors who have sat up all night nursing sick babies, only to be confronted next morning by illegible contributions; the moral being that you should typewrite your manuscript. It gives precise information on the subject of numbering your pages and of writing only on one side of the paper. It supplies a list of journals where republics and monarchies can be harmlessly discussed. The novice, seeing how easy the whole thing is and urged to tempt the cupidity of editors by enclosing stamps, re-writes his essay and is paid for it with lavish prophecies of future greatness by the editor of a Nebraskan religious journal. And that is how we lucky literary men begin our lives.

¶[In addition to its other virtues *The Editor* can solve difficult problems of casuistry. "A Reader" in the November number wants to know "why it is considered improper, and almost dishonest, for an individual to offer his manuscript to several periodicals simultaneously, when the syndicates do it as a matter of course." To this *The Editor* can give the correct answer. A heart-broken lady "who complains that editors fold her manuscripts when it becomes necessary to return same and thereby destroys their neat appearance and marketable value," is

advised "to send a stamped and addressed envelope of just the size to fit your manuscripts, when you are forwarding the latter." That would certainly meet the case. Some of the letters received at the office show the sinister side of literary life. "A correspondent states that *Happy Home* (Chicago) wrote, requesting contributions for various departments and stating that any material accepted would be paid for, provided the price was marked upon the article when submitted. In response to this, three articles were submitted, but our correspondent has not been able to secure a reply to any letters since." The feelings of a refined young lady awaiting the return of her manuscript from *Happy Home* (Chicago) must be excessively curious. There is the conciseness of a Grecian tragedy in another note. "A correspondent advises us that the editor of the defunct *Woman's Magazine* has been found," and then follow his unhappy name and address. I feel sure that's a nasty one for the editor. But even that is nothing in comparison with the suggestive mystery of some of the editorial paragraphs. Look at this: "We may have something of interest to say about the publication *Down in Dixie* in our next number. In the meantime, send them nothing." If I were *Down in Dixie*, I think I should throw up the sponge before that next number came out.

¶It seems that *The Editor* has started an "American Fraternity of Writers," a cross between a literary trade-union and a debt-collecting agency. "The Fraternity," I read, "has been able to save a great number of authors from pillage; it has caused certain houses who had grown shameless with their impunity to become more careful; it has awakened a wholesome spirit of caution in those who sent manuscripts to publishers; it has caused a

wider recognition of the reality of literary property; and it is still preparing the way for a thorough reform of the whole conduct and management of literary property." Apart from its pathos, this is really very interesting. The idea of this "Fraternity of Writers," with its two hundred fiery-eyed members, — ladies for the most part, I fancy —, these esteemed contributors to *Down in Dixie*, to *Tips* (Cincinnati), and *The Household* (Boston), terrorizing publishers and forcing haggard editors to their knees, — makes one tremble for our national reputation for humor. And yet there are people whom it has made happy. "Years ago," says a correspondent, "the writer sent two valuable articles to a Chicago paper, enclosing stamps for return if not used. As they were neither used nor returned, he wrote, enclosing stamp, asking the editor to send them back. Several months later he sent again, and after several more months, wrote, asking the editor if articles were accepted, used and paid for if unsolicited, and returned if not desired. An affirmative answer was not followed by return of the missing articles, nor explanation, until the Secretary of the A. F. W. wrote; then came a speedy reply, saying that a search had been made, but the articles could not be found." A man who can spend years — literally years — trying to make Chicago disgorge "two valuable articles" is certainly in a fit condition to join the "American Fraternity of Writers."

¶After all, is *The Editor* so very comical? I am not sure that it ought not to disgust as much as it amuses. There are many professional men of letters, I know, who hold the notion that literary work should not be done for pay. When a man has reached a sufficient eminence, and is in enjoyment of an excellent income, he usually

gives way to ideas of that sort. I do not hold with them myself. The journeyman has his uses—I even try to believe there is virtue in a minor poet—and the acceptance of a reward for honest work honestly done seems to me in no ways ignoble. What American literature and journalism suffer from is a disease of a very different kind. It is the willful doing of work that is essentially worthless, and the doing of it simply for the sake of its reward. The childishness and insincerity of the great majority of American papers are due directly to this; and it is this which *The Editor* deliberately sets itself to encourage. No newspaper press in the world is so devoid of high aim, so utterly commercial as our own. One may have contributed to and worked among the papers and magazines of three continents and five countries without meeting with such foolishness and recklessness and vulgarity as may be found in the Sunday editions of even our best newspapers. The man who writes inferior matter for an inferior paper does a real service to literature by being swindled out of his payment, I would not lift a little finger to protect him.

¶There is a deliciously girlish view of the art of short-story writing in a paper contributed by Miss Helen A. Hawley to *The Editor*. She has discovered the secret of manufacturing plots, always a bothersome process. Miss Hawley goes about “forming mental pictures out of real situations.” Thus “a casual grouping in a parlor, two persons out of doors on a summer’s day, might suggest half a dozen different stories.” “To take an every-day illustration. Suppose I see a man running on the railroad track. It may mean that he wishes to warn a train of danger; he may snatch a lovely child from death; there may be a broken bridge down the track; he

may meet his own death. Any number of situations are suggested. Give a little thought to the simplest picture, whether alive or painted by the artist's hand, and it is surprising what a nucleus it becomes for the grouping of characters." It would be cruel to examine this young lady's advice too closely. I am sure she puts it into excellent practice somewhere. But what she says throws some light on one aspect of the literary character. The fundamental distinction between writers and other men is the taint of "copy." It is the misfortune of literary people that they have to write about something. There is no reason, of course, why they should, but the thing is so. Consequently they are always looking about for something to write on. They cannot take a pure-minded interest in anything in earth or heaven. Their servant is no servant, but a character; their cat is a possible reservoir of humorous observation; they look out of windows and see men as columns walking. Even the sanctity of their own hearts, their self-respect, their most private emotions are disregarded. It is amazing what a lot of latter-day literature consists of such breaches of confidence. And not simply latter-day literature.

¶I happened to mention only the other day to one of our most popular writers that I had visited South Africa. His instinctive comment was: "There must be splendid material in South Africa." Upon my word, I believe literary men talk and think of nothing but "shop." You visit a literary man's house and are fortunate if you leave no marketable impression behind. The literary entertainers eye you over as if they were dealers in a slave mart and speculate on your uses. They try to think how you would do as a scoundrel, and mark your little turns of phrase and kinds of thought to that end. The

innocent visitor bites his cake and talks about theaters, while the meditative person in the arm-chair may be in imagination stabbing him or starving him on a desert island, or even—horrible to tell!—flinging him headlong into the arms of the young lady to the right, and “covering her face with a thousand passionate kisses.”

A manuscript in the rough of a Literary Lady's that I recently suppressed was an absolutely scandalous example of this method of utilizing one's acquaintances. Mrs. Harborough, who was, indeed, the Literary Lady's most confidential friend for six weeks or more, she had made to elope with Scrimgeour—as steady and honorable a man as I know, though unpleasant to the Literary Lady on account of his manner of holding his teacup. I believe there really was something—quite harmless, of course—between Mrs. Harborough and Scrimgeour, and that imparted in confidence, had been touched up with vivid color here and there and utilized freely. Scrimgeour is presented as always holding teacups in his peculiar way, so that anyone would recognize him at once. The Literary Lady called that character. Then Harborough, who is really on excellent terms with his wife, and, in spite of his quiet manner, a very generous and courageous fellow, is turned aside from his headlong pursuit of the fugitives through Tuxedo—they elope from New York on Scrimgeour's “tandem”—by the fear of being hit by a golf ball. I pointed out to the Literary Lady that these things were calculated to lose her friends, and she promised to destroy the likeness; but I have no confidence in her promise. She will probably clap a viloent auburn wig on Mrs. Harborough and make Scrimgeour squint and give Harborough a beard. The point that she wo n't grasp is that with that fatal facility for detail, which is one of the most indisputable proofs

of woman's intellectual inferiority, she has reproduced endless remarks and mannerisms of these excellent people with phonographic fidelity. This, of course, is a purely personal matter, but it illustrates very well the shameless way in which those who have the literary taint will make a "market" of their most intimate affairs.

¶I hear that the editor of *The Bookman* is not Mr. Pecksniff, as I had supposed, but Mr. Peck. It is only right that his name should be given correctly, since his other virtues were most unfairly plagiarized by Charles Dickens.

